

Europa 2011: Forests

**Flowers** 

Two Art issues









FO 708-709

## Europa 2011: Forests

#### Forest Growth on the Faroe Islands

Forests - not exactly what one associates with the Faroe Islands - rather the contrary. The North Atlantic archipelago is known for its treeless appearance. Climatic and geographic conditions, human influence and centuries of sheep-breeding have left the islands practically treeless.

#### Forests of the Past

But it has not always been that way. If we go back to the volcanic period millions of years ago, we note that there have been periods of extensive forest growth. Charred wood residues, and prints from leaves and needles are found in the coal strata in Suðuroy and Mykines. These finds indicate more favorable times on the mini-continent, which the current Faroe then were part of. Cypress, yew and juniper, giant sequoia and various kinds of deciduous trees - it's hard to imagine today.

#### After the Ice Age and the Settlement

When the Faroes were colonized, there were some natural woods on the islands. The only indigenous conifer was juniper, which is thought to have been quite common back then. Today this wood only appears in its original form, on the island Svínoy, but we have found roots of juniper in the peat layers on other islands as well.

Of deciduous trees were Dwarf Willow, Woolly Willow and Arctic Willow quite widespread, but Woolly Willow and the Arctic Willow are almost extinct because of the extensive sheep farming.

Birch has also grown wildly in the Faroe Islands since the last ice age, but rather dispersed - and disappeared after the colonization.

We also know that hazel has grown in the Faroe Islands around year 1000, but whether it was a native Faroese tree or it was planted by the early settlers, is uncertain. The hazel tree disappeared again around the 13th century when the climate became colder.

#### **Plantations**

There has, through time, probably always been a few trees at farms and in gardens on the Faroes, but not in any large scale. In 1885 there was an attempt to replant trees on a large scale outside Tórshavn, but this failed. In 1903 they tried again and this time it worked. This plantation became what we today call "Viðarlundin" in Tórshavn - a recreational area in a valley, which today is centrally located near Tórshavn City. In 1969 the plantation was expanded and again in 1979, and is now the biggest "forest" in the Faroes. Besides the plantation is also



a grove surrounding the former TB sanatorium in *Hoydalar*, now high school, and on the field called *Debesartrøð*, where the Provincial Library and the Faroese University is located.

In December 1988 a violent hurricane ravaged the islands. Wind speeds were up over 60 meters per second and the hurricane caused extensive damage on houses and trees. A very large proportion of the trees in the Plantation in Tórshavn were destroyed in the hurricane winds. The subject of the 10 DKK stamp depicts a cluster of these trees which are still lying on an incline. Extensive work has since been done to restore the plantation, and today it appears as a very beautiful area with young and old trees.

Besides in Tórshavn more plantations were planted in the early 20th century on the surrounding islands. In 1913, for example, the almost equally famous plantation in the small settlement *Selatrað* was planted, and the following year the plantation in the village Kunoy, which is depicted on the 12 DKK stamp. The plantation in Kunoy was

originally larger than it is today, 17,000 square metres were planted - but today only approx. 7,800 square metres are covered by trees, and the grove is thus the smallest plantation in the islands. One oddity of the plantation in Kunoy is that it is planted around a giant rock, which in ancient times probably has fallen from the mountain Urðarfjall above the plantation. The rock, called Eggjarsteinur, can also be seen on the stamp.

There have since been planted several groves around the Faroes. In Vágur and Tvøroyri on Suðuroy - in the villages Miðvágur and Sandavágur on Vágoy - in Mikladalur on Kalsoy - and also the beautiful park, "Uti í Grøv", by the city Klaksvík on Borðoy.

#### Anker Eli Petersen

Cources.

1989

Um skógir í Føroyum. Article in Varðin 5 by Rasmus Rasmussen, 1925

Upprunavøkstur í Føroyum. Internet article by Jens-Kjeld Kjeldsen Træplanting í Føroyum í eina øld. Andrias Højgaard,







FO 710-711

Test proof

### **Flowers**

#### Red campion, Silene dioica

The plant is widely known as red campion, while its botanical name is Silene dioica. Red. campion is a member of the carnation family, of the genus Silene. In addition to the red campion, its relative the moss campion (Silene acaulis) grows on the Faroe Islands. The Faroese name bjargablóma (mountain flower) is given to the flower because it is a mountain-dwelling wildflower that grows in attractive dense cushions with pink and occasionally white flowers. Only in the Faroe Islands is the word 'mountain' linked to the plant's name, so the Faroese name is accepted as being original. Red campion grows in steep rocky slopes and in inaccessible lower-mountain areas. Red campion is a rare plant. It is not found on any of the smaller islands or on Sandoy or Eysturoy. It is considered to be an indigenous Faroese plant, i.e. it was brought to the islands by the wind, ocean currents or birds and not by human activity.

Red campion is an herbaceous perennial and can grow to just over a metre in height. It flowers in July. The vertical stalks grow from a slender, creeping stock. The plant has two kinds of hairy leaves. The upper leaves are pointed and without stalks while the lower leaves have long, winged stalks and are ovalshaped. The red and occasionally white petals are large and the flower has a central ring of flaps. Red campion is a dioecious species, with separate male and female plants. The male plant has a 10-veined calyx and the female plant has a 20-veined calyx. The fruit is an ovoid capsule that opens up at the apex with ten teeth, which curve back.

#### Wood Cranesbill, Geranium sylvaticum

The plant is widely known as Wood Cranesbill, its Faroese name "litingarsortugræs" (colour black grass) and its botanical name is Geranium sylvaticum. It is the only species of Cransebill found on the Faroe



Islands. Its Faroese name refers to the fact that the plant is used to make natural black dve. The Icelandic name also refers to the plant's natural black dve. The name of the plant in other countries derives from the special five-sectioned stalk, which looks like the head and beak of a crane when the petals have fallen off. Hence its common Danish name "Storkenæb" (storksbill). Similar plants in the same genus are commonly called cranesbills and heron's bill. Storksbill grows on the Faroe Islands. It is considered to be an indigenous Faroese plant, i.e. it was brought to the islands by the wind, ocean currents or birds and not by human activity. It is not found on the smallest islands and is rarely found on Suðuroy or Sandoy but is common on Streymoy and Eysturoy. It grows on low-lying land and is never found growing on heights greater than 300 metres. It is a perennial plant that flowers in June and July. It can grow up to 50 cm in height and

has a vertical stalk with long hairs at the top and short hairs at the bottom. The leaves are very large and divided into fine leaflets. The flowers are typically blue and sometimes red. Fully-grown, the flowers are 10–18 mm in diameter and grow in pairs. In general, the plant is dioecious. It has five blue or red petals, and the centre of the flower is light, almost white. The flower and seed pod is divided into five single fruits.

Anna Maria Fosaa







FO 712-713 Test proof

## Art: Bergithe Johannessen

#### - watercolour painter from Vestmanna

Bergithe Christine Johannessen (1905-95) was the first Faroese to be admitted to the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. Born in Vestmanna, she was the daughter of Madgalena and Niels Skaale Johannessen, merchant and grocer. Bergithe Johannessen was 18 years old when she travelled to London to study painting. She went to the Sidscup School of Art from 1923 until 1925 and specialised in watercolour painting. She then moved to Copenhagen, where she attended the School of Painting at Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts from 1925 until 1931. After completing her studies, she continued living in Copenhagen, where she worked as a porcelain painter at the Royal Danish Porcelain Factory. In 1939, she married semi-skilled worker Arnold Rönnow Torp - Bergithe Johannessen was her artist name.

She travelled frequently to the Faroe Islands to paint and she participated in many Olaj Exhibitions from 1956 until 1980. She was also represented at the major exhibitions organised by the Faroe Islands Art Association in the 1950s: Faroese Art at the Free

Exhibition Building in Copenhagen in 1995; Faroese Art at Iceland's Museum of Art, Listasavn Íslands in 1961 and Faroese Art at the Bergen Art Association in 1970. The Faroe Islands Museum of Art has ten of her watercolours in its collection.

Bergithe Johannessen primarily painted landscapes; colourist watercolours featuring land, sea and skies. Sometimes the paintings have houses and sheep, but never people.

"Skerjut strond" ("Glowing beach") is a watercolour painted in 1964. A green summer landscape unfolds in the foreground. In the middle of the picture is a fence and a sheep standing close to the edge of the rocks. The fence draws the eye towards the middle distance, from the edge of the beach, light, and rocks into the inlet, which takes over. On the other side of the inlet, another rocky landscape can be seen off in the distance, with thick green foliage under a heavy fog that hangs in the background.

"Úr Nólsoy" is also a watercolour from 1964. Here, the foreground is split. On the right is an open view to the water in the middle dis-



tance: on the left, rocks rise up and block the view. Some of the forms in the foreground are similar to the other watercolour, but here the middle distance is painted more intricately. A stone dyke runs from the rocks to a field of grass. What appears to be driftwood along the dyke creates depth in the picture. A blue-grey cape spreads across nearly the entire middle distance, separating it from the background, which is a distant landscape on the other side of a strait. The sky is a heavy, light grey plane with scattered indications of clouds, emphasising the enclosed look. The inlet in the foreground is separated from the strait in the middle distance, which ends at the heavily clouded sky. Against the grey and white, the green colours in the grass and blue water create suspense in the painting.

Bergithe Johannessen also painted oil paintings. The Faroe Islands Museum of Art has one of these paintings from 1932. The main scene is a stream winding through a green landscape with grass hanging over the stream banks. A brown fell rises up fills the

entire middle distance. In the background, a thin veil of fog covers the top and opens occasionally to reveal a light sky.

In the catalogue from the 1955 exhibition in Copenhagen, the author William Heinesen wrote that Bergithe Johannessen made "the fine, gentle watercolour her speciality". In the Weilbach encyclopaedia of artists, the artist Bárður Jákupsson writes that she mastered the technique of watercolours in a brilliant and artistic way and that she portrayed atmospheres in the Faroese landscape, with a particular focus on villages and coasts.

Bergithe Johannessen watercolours and oil paintings are fine representatives of Faroese art from the mid-twentieth century. Her paintings portray landscapes, villages and the sea with empathy and a precise sense of colour and form.

Malan Marnersdóttir







FO 714-715

#### Test proof

## Art: Frida Zachariassen

Frida Zachariassen was one of the most distinctive artists in the Faroe Islands during the 1950s. She developed her own personal style. characterised by geometric figures in compositions portraying landscapes, towns, villages and people. Sometimes the colours in Frida Zachariassen's paintings are clear and strong, but they also often feature blurred and thin colour tones: in some of the paintings, earth tones dominate. In the 1930s and 1940s, her painting style focused on content and emotions leaning towards the romantic, with replication of the grandeur of nature, the sublime and the eternal. Around 1950, Frida Zachariassen began painting more abstractly. Landscapes and people were dissolved and reconstructed with squares, stripes and triangles. The main works are constructions made of lines and figures in colours such as saturated green and cool blue and grey, sometimes accompanied by black lines. Despite this abstraction and organisation, Frida Zachariassen's paintings were never non-figurative. Her paintings always depict something recognisable.

In Frida Zachariassen's landscape paintings, the relationship between the land and people is clear and meaningful. People populate her landscapes and they are often embedded in the landscape. The people in her paintings are active; they work as fishermen, prepare their boats to set sail, unload, walk on fell paths, go to the market, butcher pilot whales, harvest straw and herd sheep.

Frida Zachariassen was from Klaksvík and lived there for the majority of her life. She was born in 1912 and died in 1992. Her mother was Magdalena Jacobsen, who was from Klaksvík's neighbourhood *Uppsalar*, and her father was Jógvan Rasmussen, who was called by the place he came from, Jógvan í Grótinum, located by Skálafjørður on Eysturoy. Frida Zachariassen grew up in a busy home with nine siblings and a father who was the leading figure in Klaksvík at the start of the twentieth century.

In 1927, Frida Zachariassen completed her middle school examination with good marks and in 1937 she graduated from the Merchants' School in Copenhagen. She also wanted an education in art. She wrote about this in the book "Strev í málrøkt" (Efforts in tending language):

"As a youth, I was most interested in working with paintings and getting an education in Copenhagen. But it quickly became clear that



one could not live from making "art". Despite the fact that Faroese could easily gain admission to the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts at that time, there were so few that four years there seemed to be of no use and far too expensive. Therefore, I chose a business school education and then began working at an office."

In other words, it was impossible for her to go into a field that could not provide an income. Instead, she found a means of survival and made art in her free time

During the war, she worked at the offices of the merchant and shipping company, J. F. Kjølbro in her home town. In May of 1944, she married Guttormur Zachariassen, but their marriage was short-lived. He died in a wreck in February 1945. After the war, she returned to Copenhagen, where she worked at an office until 1949. Of the drawings held at Norðoya Listafelag (the Northern Islands Art Association), many are from this period. They indicate that she went to the Danish Museum of Art to draw. When she returned to Klaksvík.

she oversaw the region's health insurance for more than twenty years.

Frida Zachariassen's production of paintings was greatest in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s, her eyesight diminished, so she began writing instead of painting.

Many of her paintings are from Klaksvík and the surrounding region; these include land-scapes, portraits and images of working life. The colours often contrast: red and green, blue and green, red and blue, giving her paintings a sense of both coldness and warmth. It was also during the 1950s that she developed her special cubist style. Meanwhile, she began to travel extensively to develop her art.

The rhythmic patterns and light colours that mark the paintings "Kona" (Woman) and "Urtagarður" (The Garden) show the splendour of Frida Zachariassen's unique style. She created art featuring cubist forms that concentrate her expression while giving it form and depth.

Malan Marnersdóttir

# Faroese Post Offices using postmarks per 1.1.2011

Date postmarks are used by the following post offices:

100 Tórshavn
766 Kirkja
700 Klaksvík
370 Miðvágur
388 Mykines
270 Nólsoy
450 Oyri
210 Sandur
600 Saltangará
240 Skúvoy
765 Svínoy
800 Tvøroyri

Registration numbers for registered letters exist at the following post offices:

100 Tórshavn
700 Klaksvík
370 Miðvágur
210 Sandur
600 Saltangará
800 Tvøroyri

In addition to the general date postmarks:

In Klaksvík and Saltangará there is a roll postmark.

In Tórshavn there is a roll postmark and a machine postmark.

### Faroe Islands Post Offices



Since 1996 a number of Small European Postal Administrations have cooperated in a group called **SEPAC**. Today this group includes Aland, Faroe Islands, Gibraltar, Greenland, Guernsey, Iceland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City. All the members of the group have small home markets and face the same challenges, making it natural to cooperate. Twice, in 2007 and 2009, the SEPAC members have issued postage stamps according to a common theme: Sceneries.

## Faroese stamp elected as most beautiful SEPAC stamp!

The SEPAC stamp vote is over and the winning stamp was the Faroese Sepac stamp from 2009 picturing beautiful scenery from the small village of Leynar. The stamp was issued on 16 September 2009 and the photographer is Ólavur Frederiksen.

The second place went to Iceland for the Sepac stamp of 2009, while the Faroe Islands also won the third place with the 2007 Sepac stamp picturing scenery from Hoyvík with Nólsoy island in the background. The stamp was issued on 1st October 2007 and the photographer is Absalon Hansen.

From May to October 2010 voters from all over the world were invited to cast one vote each for the most beautiful SEPAC stamp. Votes were to be cast online at the SEPAC website www.sepacstamps.eu or at stamp fairs and exhibitions.

The winning stamp received 15.2% of all votes and was as such a deserved winner









## Mr. Hunderup the winner of 6,000 Euro

When the voting closed, lots were drawn for a main prize of EUR 6,000. The lucky winner, whose name was drawn from the hat, is Mr. John Hunderup from Denmark.

In addition, the names of 40 lucky winners of the 2007 and 2009 Sepac souvenir folders were drawn. The list of winners is available at www.sepacstamps.eu.

On Monday, 24th January 2011 Mrs. Svanbjørg Manai, the Posta Stamps manager, handed Mr. Hunderup the 6,000 Euro check.

The ceremony took place at the North Atlantic House - the cultural center in Copenhagen in which you can encounter North Atlantic culture. In the background, you can see two paintings from the Steffan Danielsen exhibition.

Mr. Hunderup was very happy to have won this prize. He has been collecting Faroese stamps ever since the first Faroese stamps were issued in 1975 and therefore he has a complete collection of Faroese stamps which he is very proud of.



## The SEPAC issues: "Beautiful Corners of Europe"

#### Do you have a complete SEPAC collection?

If you don't, you have the opportunity to purchase all the SEPAC stamps at once in the 2007 and 2009 Sepac folders.

The folders contain all the stamps which have been issued in connection with Sepac joint issues.

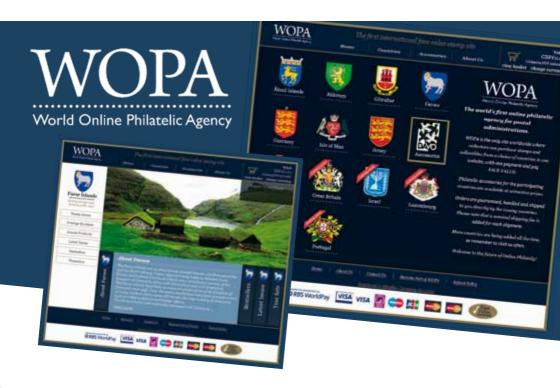
The current members of SEPAC (Small European Postal Administration Cooperation) are: Åland, Faroe Islands, Gibraltar, Greenland, Guernsey, Iceland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican City.

The next joint Sepac stamp issue will be launched on 28th September 2011, and all the stamps will be available in a joint folder entitled "Beautiful Corners of Europe 3".

The folders can be ordered by completing the coupon in this magazine or at our website: www.stamps.fo.







# Faroese stamps available on www.wopa-stamps.com

WOPA – World Online Philatelic Agency – launches the first international face value stamp site.

It is now possible to buy at face value and on a single site the new issues and all available stamp products from a variety of postal administrations, including Aland, The Faroe Islands, Gibraltar, Guernsey (with Alderney), Jersey and Isle of Man. Furthermore additional countries are being added all the time.

The stamp collector will be able to shop around all of the postal administrations with one cart. At the checkout he will make a single payment on a secure server and will even be able to select the currency of his choice with no extra fees.

This innovative and user friendly website offers collectors worldwide a great opportunity to buy new issues from a variety of countries at face value.

WOPA, which is a division of Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau Ltd., has plans to expand its service to the vast majority of major postal administrations worldwide.

The site has been launched in English. However WOPA will introduce other major languages during the course of 2011.

### New Stamp Issues 26 April 2011





Value:



26.04.2011

10,00 and 12,00 DKK

FO 708-709

Numbers: Stamp size: 28.8 x 38.4 and 38.4 x 28.8 mm Photos: Anker Eli Petersen and Syanna Oknadal

Printing method:

Printer: LM Group, Canada

Postal use: Inland small letters and small letters

to Europe, 0-50 g





New stamp issue: **Flowers** 

Date of issue: 26.04.2011 Value: 14.00 and 20.00 DKK Numbers: FO 710-711

Stamp size: 27,0 x 36,0 mm Design: Astrid Andreasen

Printing method: Offset

Printer: LM Group, Canada Postal use:

Large inland letters, 51-100 g and large letters to other countries, 0-50 g.

Art: Bergithe Johannessen





New stamp issue:

26.04.2011 Date of issue: Value: 2.00 and 24.00 DKK Numbers: FO 712-713 Stamp size: 40,0 x 27,5 mm Edward Fuglø Layout:

Printing method: Offset

LM Group, Canada Printer:

Postal use: Medium letters to other countries, 0-50 g

6,00 and 26,00 DKK

26.04.2011

Art: Frida Zachariassen





Value: Numbers:

FO 714-715 26 x 40 mm Stamp size: Lavout: Edward Fuglø Printing method:

New stamp issue:

Date of issue:

Offset Printer: LM Group, Canada

Postal use: Small inland letters, 0-50 g and medium

letters to Europe, 101-250 g.

Posta Stamps Óðinshædd 2 FO-100 Tórshavn Faroe Islands

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